GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:110
ANSWERED ON:31.07.2006
FOOD CREDIT CARD SCHEME
Rawale Shri Mohan

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Pilot Project on Food Credit Cards under Targeted Public Distribution System was formulated and is being implemented in some States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the achievements of this pilot project so far;

(d) whether the Government proposes to implement this project throughout the country;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a), (b), (c), (d) (e) & (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO.110 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 31.07.2006 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a) & (b): The Planning Commission had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 13.20 crore for the 10th Five Year Plan for the pilot project in three States, viz. Kerala, M.P. and H.P., to implement the Smart Cards as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme. An amount of Rs. 1.12 crore has been disbursed during the last 3 financial years, i.e., 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05. No money was disbursed during 2005-06.

(c), (d), (e) & (f): The progress of the project of the three States was reviewed and it was not found satisfactory. Operational difficulties such as lack of awareness and education of the consumers and the Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers, lack of electricity in remote and hilly areas high costs involved, etc. did not allow the Scheme to take off successfully. In view of this, it was decided that this Scheme in its current form need not be continued. However, keeping in view the basic objective of the Smart Card scheme of using information technology, it has been decided to take a scheme for computerization of PDS operations in all States and UTs. Under Phase I of this scheme, computerization of ration cards, PDS module, FPS profiles and FPS operations is proposed to be taken up for which a token amount of Rs. 5 crore has been provided in the current year`s budget.